

WELCOME TO WESTMINSTER
November 23rd, 2025



Worship Leader: Sheila McLeod
Music: Cheryl Finnie

“We are a faith community building relationships with God, all people, and our world.”

✝ You are invited to stand as you are able

GREETING

In the name of Jesus Christ, who calls us to seek justice and resist evil, to love and serve with others.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/LIFE AND WORK OF THE CHURCH

INTROIT (MV 7) ‘Listen, God is Calling’

Land Acknowledgement

Today as we gather to worship let us remember that we worship God on the historic and unceded lands of Treaty 7 and neighbouring Treaty 4. Traditional lands of the Metis, Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, Stoney Nakoda and the T’suut’ina as well as the Cree and Ojibwa people. As Christ’s people, let us be people of love, truth and reconciliation. May we live with respect on this land, and peace and friendship with its people.

Affirming Statement

“As a community church that gathers from many smaller communities in the Medicine Hat area, Westminster United Church publicly declares our commitment to creating a space where people are welcome, safe, and encouraged to participate in the life of the church inclusive of: Sexual orientation, gender identity, two spirited people, differing abilities, age, ethnic background, race, marital status, or economic circumstance.

Participation in the life of the church includes leadership, membership, sacraments, marriage, and celebrating milestones of life's journey. We celebrate the richness of diversity, and we commit ourselves to openness, growth, education and to influencing the community for social justice. In our dedication to living our God's word and with God's help, we devote ourselves to proactive learning and inclusion."

✠ **PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

Blessed be Christ, the Prince of Peace
who breaks down walls that divide.

The peace of Christ is always with us.

Praise to Christ who unites us in peace.

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

✠ **CALL TO WORSHIP**

✠ **Procession of Christ Candle**

Long, long ago before there was anything, before there was a world, before there was light, before there was darkness, there was God: Creator and Source of Life. God moved and God breathed the world into being, and God said, "Let there be light." Not quite so long but still very long ago, one was born who embodied the light of the Creator. We present this candle to remind ourselves and to celebrate Christ's constant presence. May we always seek His guiding light in our lives, as we are called to carry that light into the world.

Lighting of the Rainbow Candle

Jesus taught us to love one another in a way that sparked a movement and a new understanding of God. We light this rainbow candle as a visible reminder of the radical inclusivity shown to us by Jesus, who calls us to follow him.

Lighting of Peace Candle

"We light the candle of Peace to remind ourselves that Christ is the Prince of Peace. We pray for peace for ourselves and for the world."

✠ **OPENING HYMN VU 326 'O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing'**

✠ OPENING PRAYER

Be with us Blessed Christ, Prince of Peace, that compassion will be wedded to power, **that softness will come to the world so harsh and unkind**, that both men and women will be gentle, **that both men and women will be strong**, that no person will be oppressed or enslaved, **that all will be rich and free and varied**, that the greed of some will give way to the needs of many, **that all will share fairly in the earth's abundance**, that all will care for the sick, the weak, the old and the homeless, **that all will nourish the young**, that all will cherish life's creatures, plants, land, air, and water, **that all will live in harmony with each other and the earth. Then everywhere will be called Eden again. Amen**

Prayer of Confession

God of Love, Faithful God in whom we have faith, in the wrong we have done and in the good we have not done, we have sinned in ignorance, we have sinned in weakness; we have sinned through our own deliberate fault. *(Time for silent confession)*

We are truly sorry. **We repent and turn to you. Forgive us, and renew our lives. Amen**

Words of Assurance

God, the Creator, brings us new life, forgives and redeems us. Let us take hold of this forgiveness, and live our lives in the spirit of Jesus. **Amen**

Prayers of the People

Come Holy Spirit, grant us Jesus' Gospel of Jubilee: the Good News of liberation, freedom, and unity; proclaim the release of the prisoners of division; recover the sight of those blinded by fear, hatred, jealousy, greed, and power. Grant peace and freedom to the poor, oppressed and lost.

(Please come to the microphone to offer your prayers.) **Amen**

Let us continue our prayer by praying A Prayer for the Reign of Christ, **#214 in Voices United**, then conclude by praying **The Lord's Prayer**.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Loving God, you speak to us in so many ways: in the song of a bird, in the sound of running water, in the voices of friends, in hugs, in the songs we sing, and in the stories of the Bible. Speak to us now through the reading of scripture. Help us to hear your voice and follow the way of Jesus. **Amen**

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Jeremiah 23:1-6

New International Version

The Righteous Branch

23 “Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of my pasture!” declares the LORD. ² Therefore this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says to the shepherds who tend my people: “Because you have scattered my flock and driven them away and have not bestowed care on them, I will bestow punishment on you for the evil you have done,” declares the LORD. ³ “I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and will bring them back to their pasture, where they will be fruitful and increase in number. ⁴ I will place shepherds over them who will tend them, and they will no longer be afraid or terrified, nor will any be missing,” declares the LORD. ⁵ “The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will raise up for David^[a] a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. ⁶ In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteous Savior.

One: This is the good news of Jesus Christ.

All: Praise to Christ, the living word.

Luke 1:68-79

VU 900 Song of Zechariah

Blessed be the God of Israel,

who has come to the people and set them, free
who has raised up for us a mighty savior,

born of the house of the servant David.

Through the holy prophets of old

God promised to save us from enemies,

From the hands of all who hate us,

to show the mercy promised to our ancestors,

to remember the holy covenant,

the oath God swore to our ancestors Abraham and Sarah,

to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

free to serve God without fear,

holy and righteous in God's presence,

all the days of our life.

Refrain: God shall fulfill the promise and bring the people peace.

And you, child,

will be called the prophet of the Most High,

for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,

to give the people knowledge of salvation

by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God,

the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

to shine on those who sit in darkness,

in the shadow of death,

and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Refrain: God shall fulfill the promise and bring the people peace.

One: These are the words of the ancient songwriters.

All: Thanks be to God for the word.

Colossians 1:11-20

New International Version

¹¹ being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, ¹² and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you^[a] to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. ¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and

brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

The Supremacy of the Son of God

¹⁵ The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. ¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

One: This is the witness of the Church.

All: Thanks be to God for the Word.

Luke 23:33-43

New International Version

³³ When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. ³⁴ Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”^[a] And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

³⁵ The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is God’s Messiah, the Chosen One.”

³⁶ The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar ³⁷ and said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.”

³⁸ There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

³⁹ One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!”

⁴⁰ But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? ⁴¹ We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.”

⁴² Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”^[b]

⁴³ Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

One: This is the good news of Jesus Christ.

All: Praise to Christ, the living word.

SERMON: Jesus Christ is the One. What does that mean to me?

✠**HYMN: VU 598** 'When Pain of the World'

MINUTES FOR MISSION "Together in Prayer and Solidarity"

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

✠**DOXOLOGY: VU 544** 'In Gratitude and Humble Trust'

✠**OFFERTORY PRAYER**

In the name and in the spirit of Jesus, we bring our gifts to you, O God. Help us to give them with faith, and a ready mind, a willing spirit, and a joyful heart. Amen

✠**A NEW CREED (VU 918)**

✠**CLOSING HYMN VU 333** 'Love Divine, All Loves Excelling'

✠**BENEDICTION/COMMISSIONING**

May the grace of God, deeper than our imagination; the strength of Christ, stronger than our need; and the communion of the Holy Spirit, richer than our togetherness; guide and sustain us today and in all our tomorrows.

Let us go gladly into the world. Be filled with the love of God, dance to the song of the Spirit, and befriend the Christ in each new day. **Amen**

✠**CHORAL AMEN (VU 974)**

✠**SENDING FORTH HYMN VU 326 Vs. 1 & 4** 'O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing'

Prayers for this service from: "Celebrate God's Presence: A Book of Services for The United Church of Canada", published by the United Church Publishing House in the year 2000.